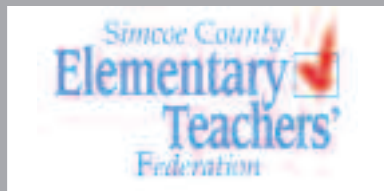


# Chalk Talk



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**S**olidarity is the key to ensure that a federation or union is successful in achieving gains and improvements for its members. ETFO and its predecessor organizations FW and OPS have had a long standing history of solidarity as was seen during the political protest of 1997, the full withdrawal of services in 1998, Campaign 200 in 2004 and Closing the Gap in 2008. Through the solidarity of our membership, SCETF Members have realized many gains in working conditions including preparation time for all members and over time, increases in preparation time, a decrease in supervision, a new staffing process which allows teachers to arrange their own trades, members being able to write their own absence notes and improvements to our health and dental plan.

There was a time when male teachers earned a greater salary than female teachers, some women were forced to resign when they married or were limited to the number of years they could teach after marriage, and some women were required to resign when they had children. Through the collective resolve of our federation and its members, these discriminatory practices are part of our past.

As we move forward, together we can realize even further improvements to our working conditions and what we experience on a daily basis. Together we can make great gains. If we are divided, we will witness a decrease in our working conditions.

There is no requirement for the elementary teachers to work through their lunches, breaks, before and after school, late into the night, on weekends and on holidays. As we continue to do this and even increase the number of hours we devote to our profession, it will become an expectation of the Simcoe County District School Board as well as the Ministry of Education. Education in this province appears to be working because we as professionals continue to make it work through the endless hours we volunteer our time, energy and often, our personal resources and money to ensure that the students we are responsible for each year are successful in being the best they possibly can.

Although it goes against everything we believe in as educators, we need to put the demands of our profession aside at the end of day and take time for

ourselves and our families. We need to set a positive role model for our students and strive to achieve a balance between work and family life. We need to take time for our families, our community and ourselves. We need to take time to ensure that we are maintaining our health by eating properly, exercising and getting enough sleep. When we ensure we are physically and mentally at our best, we can do what is best for our family and for our students. This may require that you ask for support from your principal in meeting a due date and/or completing a task, you may have to say, “No” more often, and you may need to leave work at school at the end of the day and say, “That will have to wait until tomorrow.”

If we, as educators, continue to make education in Ontario work, we may continue to experience cut-backs in staffing, reductions in funding for resources, increases in class sizes and generally a decrease in the improvements in working conditions we have fought for decades as a Federation to achieve. When will we say, “Enough is enough!”?

I continue to receive phone calls and emails from members who are telling me they are stretched to the limit, the stress level is almost unbearable and there is not enough time in the day to complete the additional tasks they are being asked to do. I often hear, “What can you do to help me?” I give them recommendations but often these suggestions are ignored and members continue to go above and beyond what is legislatively required and continue to put their health in jeopardy. I will continue to lobby senior officials with the SCDSB, Trustees and MPPs. I will continue to advocate on your behalf and will continue to have grievances filed. I will work endlessly for you; however, my words are meaningless if what I explain to these various officials is not what is happening in the schools because members are making education work in Simcoe County often under unrealistic and unbearable conditions.

Many members reported that the IEP Writer was not working and was preventing people from completing IEPs on time. I did share this with the Board. The Regional Ministry of Education Office was notified and informed that the IEPs from the SCDSB may be late due to technical issues. As well,



**Janet Bigham**  
President

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## ***The ELP Arbitration***

Let's flashback to June 28th, 2011. The SCDSB had knowingly violated the class cap language in our Collective Agreement for one year. Several other arbitration rulings and settlements had been awarded in other Boards clearly stating that the School Board has no right to violate the language of the Collective Agreement in ELP classes. In response to these losses, School Boards had been forced to pay a half million dollars in damages to ETFO for violating the class size provisions for the 2010-2011 school year.

SCETF offered the SCDSB a no cost resolution to this grievance by offering to forgo all compensation for the 2010-2011 school year in exchange for staffing the ELP classes in accordance with the Collective Agreement for the 2011-2012 school year. The SCDSB declined our offer and on June 28th, the first day of this arbitration was held. The SCDSB's plan to delay and draw out this arbitration was laid out clearly before us. After the ETFO lawyer was finished opening statements in 45 minutes, the Board lawyer laid out his opening arguments over the next 4.5 hours. Day one ended with nothing more than the conclusion of opening statements. The Board denied the allegations of stall and delay tactics, however, in the hopes of resolving the matter as quickly as possible, all major stakeholders – the Arbitrator (who agreed to cancel a planned vacation), the ETFO lawyer and the SCDSB lawyer – agreed to be available for 3 dates over the summer. The Associate Director – on behalf of the SCDSB - stated that the SCDSB would be unavailable to meet over the summer.

On October 18th, 2011, the second day of arbitration was held. The Board laid out their three arguments supporting their decision to violate the Collective Agreement. Their first argument is that the ELP is “radically different” from traditional kindergarten, and therefore, because it is not kindergarten, the class caps within the Collective Agreement do not apply. Their argument is essentially that kindergarten class caps are in the Collective Agreement, but what these teachers of three to five year olds in ELP programs are teaching is not kindergarten, therefore, the caps do not apply. The SCDSB lawyer spent the entire

day interviewing the Board's first witness. Seven hours of testimony was given towards this being a radically new, play-based program, which has never been seen nor contemplated by the Collective Agreement.

The Board's second argument is that the class caps are in the Collective Agreement in order to deal with workload issues. The Board has indicated – through its opening statement - that because there is a DECE in these kindergarten classes, and because the program is play-based and teachers are not “teaching,” that teaching in an ELP class is already much easier and therefore, the class caps need not apply. I fully expect the third day of this arbitration on December 21st will be spent with the Board's lawyer continuing with their first witness to support this argument.

The Board's third and final argument is that the ELP programme was not in existence during the last round of negotiations and therefore, even if the Arbitrator does not side with the Board on their first two points, this program is

brand new and should not be subject to the language of the Collective Agreement. Much of the fourth day of this arbitration on December 7th, will no doubt be spent with the Board's lawyer arguing this position.

Clearly, most of you reading this article will not be kindergarten teachers, and some of you may not yet realize the extent to which the Board's positions can impact each one of you directly. But if you listen to what they are saying, you will hear that the Board could decide that any change in programming reflects a “radically different program,” and therefore, the Collective Agreement will not apply. To be clear, as every kindergarten teacher knows, the ELP is not radically different, however, should the Board be successful with this ridiculous argument, what could be next? Pay? Preparation Time? Supervision Time? The list could be exhaustive. The SCDSB has always maintained that they value their Teachers. That is why this direct attack, and the manner in which it is being conducted, is so offensive and dangerous to every SCETF Member.



**Nicholas Moxam**  
**1st Vice President**

One of my primary roles as your SCETF 2nd Vice President, is to represent our Federation at the monthly meetings and various activities of the Barrie and District Labour Council (BDLC). When SCETF first affiliated with the BDLC in 2004, I began my involvement as a general delegate. In January 2008, I joined the BDLC Executive to serve as the Council's recording secretary. SCETF is one of the largest union locals to have affiliated with the BDLC. With over 2,000 members in our local, we are entitled to send five delegates to each meeting. Meetings are held at the OSSTF District 17 Office in Barrie on the second Tuesday of every month between September and June. Our SCETF President, Janet Bigham is also a delegate at the Barrie and District Labour Council. SCETF is represented at the monthly meetings of the Orillia and District Labour Council by our 3rd Vice President, Sheri Birch and at the Collingwood and District Labour Council by our PAC, Jen Elliott.



**Dorothy Ramsay  
2nd Vice President**

Labour councils are formed when various unions in a city, county or region join together to develop a formal affiliation. Across Canada, there are approximately 177 labour councils. The network of labour councils across Ontario creates the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL). The OFL represents approximately 600,000 members. Each of the various provincial and territorial Federations of Labour then comprise the national body of organized labour called the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). The CLC represents approximately 2 million members. The mandate of each labour council is to use the combined strength of its members to advocate on behalf of working people and to carry out the campaigns of the CLC at the local community level.

Labour Councils provide a community forum where affiliated members can exchange news, and gain support for their bargaining initiatives. For example, when ETFO launched its "Close The Gap" campaign several years ago, the labour council network across Ontario was an effective public arena for ETFO members to publicize our union's desire to equalize elementary and secondary education funding. Most recently, the BDLC gave a financial donation to the striking Georgian College workers of OPSEU Local 349. BDLC members visited this picket line often, to boost morale and offer support to the striking workers.

Labour councils also provide a strong voice for a variety of social justice and equity issues. For example, members of the BDLC will routinely attend the December 6th women's vigils across the county that highlight the need to end violence against women in our society. Labour Councils also encourage their membership to become politically active in their respective communities and to participate on the political

campaigns of union friendly candidates in all three levels of government. During the recent provincial election, labour councils publically endorsed a variety

of union friendly political candidates across the province. In Simcoe County, the BDLC endorsed the Myrna Clark NDP campaign, the Megan Tay NDP campaign, and the Karl Walsh Liberal campaign.

If you are interested in learning more about the labour council network across Simcoe County, or would like to attend a

Labour Council meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me at [dorothy@scetf.org](mailto:dorothy@scetf.org).



*SCETF Members Stephen Bertelsen and Dorothy Ramsay (SCETF 2nd VP) with Barrie Liberal Candidate, Karl Walsh, at a community event.*

**M**y role as SCETF 3rd Vice President has kept me busy so far this year, and many upcoming activities and events are planned for the membership. Several SCETF members, including myself, volunteered with political campaigns in Simcoe County. I volunteered with a campaign in my own riding of Simcoe North which has been held for decades by the Conservatives. Part of ETFO's mandate was to work with governments, and that included establishing a positive rapport during political campaigns, because the educational workplace is decided by politicians. As all four ridings in Simcoe County are held again by Conservative MPPs, it may make it more challenging to lobby for labour-friendly initiatives for the public education sector in our region.

In September: SCETF President, Janet Bigham and I also attended an OPSEU Rally on September 10th at Georgian College, Barrie Campus to support the workers on strike at Georgian College. I was also happy to assist SCETF Status of Women Chair, Amy Stepanek with the table presentation at the "Take Back the Night" event at Barrie City Hall in mid-September.

I continue to represent SCETF at the North Simcoe Muskoka & District Labour Council which meets regularly once a month in Orillia. The pending issue at the local Labour Council is planning for the upcoming Ontario Federation of Labour Convention which is scheduled for November, at which several Executive members including myself are planning to attend to represent SCETF.

In November: Six schools from across all regions within Simcoe County will be participating in the ETFO Series - "Possibilities", a two-day workshop addressing issues of children and their families facing poverty. This is an

initiative sponsored directly through ETFO and the Ontario Ministry of Social Services, and includes outreach to local food banks, shelters, mental health and other organizations which service students in Simcoe County.

Put a big pink circle on your calendar around Wednesday, February 29th as "Pink Day" is again coming up. Last year, several schools across the county participated in our challenge to dress up in creative ways and they sent in photographs to the SCETF office. A donation was made to EGALE on behalf of the winning school. Several schools have continued the momentum by holding weekly "Pink Days" because bullying doesn't just happen once a year. Please watch for flyers that will be arriving in the Steward's mail and I encourage even more schools to participate this year in what is fast becoming an important national social justice event.



**Sheri Birch**  
3rd Vice President

Watch for information on a new resource published from ETFO entitled, "Social Justice Begins With Me", a new literature-based curriculum kit for grades K to 8, focusing on 10 monthly themes including self-esteem, peace, building supportive communities, rights of the child, untie the knots of prejudice, local and global citizenship. ETFO is also

planning to hold workshops in the coming months focusing on this new exciting curriculum resource. If you would like to borrow this ETFO resource from the SCETF Lending Library, please contact the SCETF Office at [contact@scetf.org](mailto:contact@scetf.org) or at 705-728-2888.

If you would like to become more involved with SCETF on the Equity Committee, on any of the three Labour Councils in the Simcoe region or to find out more about the upcoming Pink Day, please do not hesitate to contact the SCETF Office for more information.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the SCETF delegates and alternates who took time from their busy schedule to attend the 2011 Annual Meeting of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario which was held August 15th to the 18th. The venue was held at the Sheraton Centre Hotel in Toronto.

There were just over 500 ETFO members attending the meeting this year and attending from Simcoe County were: Heidi Ahlfeldt, Janet Bigham, Sheri Birch, Melanie Blanchard, Mark Butt, Jennifer Elliott, Roger Gagnon, Amanda Harrison, David Harrison, Nathan Klaassen, Paul Maurice, Bryan McCann, Nicholas Moxam, Sue Moxam, Dorthy Ramsay, Amy Stepanek, Lori Stevens, Karina Vasquez, Luc Voorn, John Warman and Nicolette Wismayer. Many thanks again for dedicating your time this summer.

Your new 2011-2013 ETFO Provincial Executive was elected and the results were as follows: President - Sam Hammond, Hamilton Wentworth TL; 1st Vice President: Susan Swackhammer, Grand Erie TL; Vice President: James McCormack, Waterloo TL; Vice President, Female: Maureen Winberger, Halton TL; OTF Table Officer: Rian McLaughlin, Hamilton Wentworth OT Local; Executive Members: Karen Brown, Toronto TL; Adelina Cecchin, Greater Essex TL; Ellen Chambers, Lakehead TL; Doug Cook, Upper Grand TL; Diane Dewing, Upper Canada TL; Pamela Dogia, Toronto TL; Nancy Lawler, Bluewater

TL; Monica Rusnak, Ontario North East TL; Debi Wells, Limestone TL.

The ETFO Executive positions are for a two year term. If you wish to see highlights from the ETFO Annual Meeting, visit the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario website at [www.etfo.org](http://www.etfo.org) to learn more.



**Krista Haidner**  
**Annual Meeting**

Planning for the 2012 ETFO Annual Meeting is well underway and if members with concerns would like to see them addressed at this meeting, they can put forth a resolution. All resolutions must be in writing and received at the SCETF Office by Friday, December 2, 2011.

Would you like to attend the ETFO Annual Meeting? The meeting will be held in August 2012 at the Westin Harbour Castle Hotel in Toronto. If you wish to attend the meeting, you must submit a delegate application form no later than May 4, 2012. At the SCETF Local Annual Meeting on May 30, 2012, applicants will have the opportunity to give a 2 minute speech as to why they would like to attend the 2012 ETFO Annual Meeting and then an election will take place. Application forms will be available on our SCETF website at [www.scetf.org](http://www.scetf.org).

I look forward to working on your behalf as the Annual Meeting Chair for another year. If you have any questions, I can be reached by email at [krista@scetf.org](mailto:krista@scetf.org) or Worsley Elementary School.

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The Use of Art in an FSL Classroom Workshop. If you are like me, that is "art illiterate", then you need to come to this workshop and learn many practical and useful ideas from presenters, Kathy Chamney and Lorrie Smith. It will be held on Monday, November 14th at the SCETF Office (249 Saunders Rd., Unit #3) from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. They will show you some of the activities that they have been using over the years; activities that have worked with considerable success. You may even be able to use these activities



**Paul Maurice**  
**FSL**

the following day in your (or someone else's) classroom. Their workshop at the OMLTA Conference two years ago was very well received.

As there will also be a catered dinner (gratuit) right after the workshop, the number of participants will be capped at 40. Therefore if you are interested in attending please email me as soon as possible. It will be "first come first served". If interested, please email me at [paul@scetf.org](mailto:paul@scetf.org)



*SCETF's Status of Women Chair, Amy Stepanek (4th from left) is shown here attending the 2011 ETFO Union School.*



*Luc Voorn, Treasurer of the Simcoe County Elementary Teachers' Federation participated in the Annual Terry Fox Run at Barrie's lakefront. SCETF made a \$50.00 donation to the Terry Fox Run on Luc's behalf.*

I am delighted to work on behalf of all SCETF members to serve as your Professional Learning Chair. As I work through applications for funding requests, it is impressive to see the range of additional qualification courses and conferences that our members participate in during the summer months. Another summer learning experience that many teachers participate in are the ETFO Summer Academy workshops. These are hosted throughout the province during the summer months. The Simcoe County Elementary Teachers' Federation hosted two Summer Academy workshops which were held at the SCDSB Board Office in July. Many of our members took advantage of this low cost, three day, practical workshop.

During September and October we hosted some very successful workshops by Lisa Donohue and Margo Southall that were very well received. Throughout the coming year there will be a variety of professional learning opportunities so be sure to check out our website on a regular basis, read emails from your Steward and check the bulletin board at your school for flyers outlining details of workshops.

In this edition of Chalk Talk, I would like to highlight how to access funds to help subsidize your professional learning. Funds can be accessed at the school level and through the local. By now, your In-School PL Committee should have consulted with the members on staff. Each staff then voted on the In-School Guidelines. If you have not seen a copy of this document check with your Steward. Each full-time SCETF member is allocated \$90.80. Since there may be members who choose not to utilize their allocation of funds this will create a growing account. The In-

School Guidelines should provide additional directives to establish further criteria on how the funds can be used to help offset the cost of more expensive conferences, courses or workshops that members would like to pursue. Schools are encouraged to utilize these funds and minimize the carry over to the following school year. If your school needs guidelines, go to [www.scetf.org](http://www.scetf.org) and look under Professional Learning.

The second source for funding is through SCETF. Every other year, a member may apply for \$150.00 to put towards the cost of a professional learning activity.

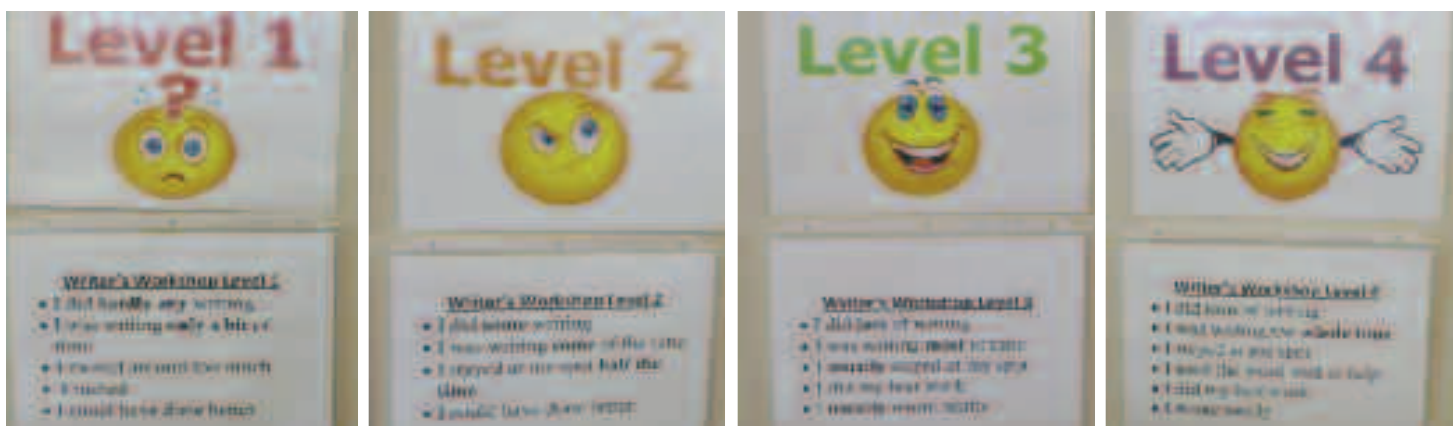
Applications can be found on our website and then sent to the SCETF Office. If you know you are attending an activity in the spring, you should apply now. This funding is available to the first 115 applicants.

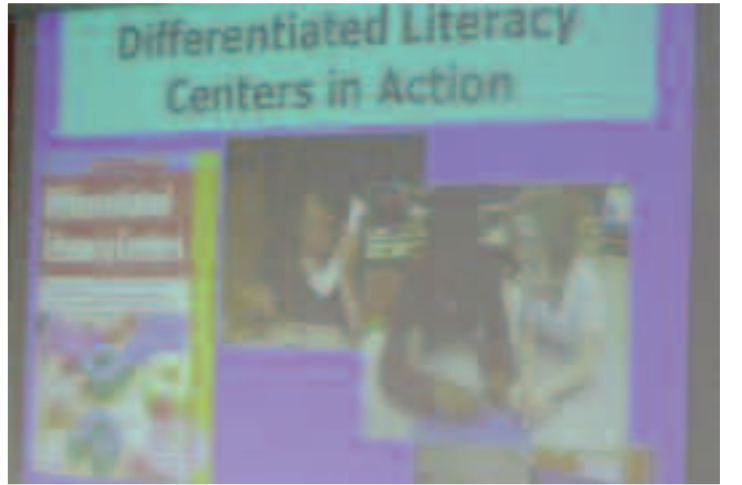
Funding is also available through the Ministry of Education TLLP. (Teacher Learning and Leadership Program for Experienced Teachers). Are you passionate about investigating a particular topic in education? Are you aware of some excellent programs around the province? What better way for you to learn than developing your own pathway of learning! Teachers may wish to work with a team of educators from other schools. Look for the pamphlet in your school. The funding for this program is made available through grants provided by the Ministry of Education and Training. In past years, Simcoe County has put forth many successful projects.

Should you have any suggestions for workshops or professional learning opportunities be sure to contact me with the details. Have a great year!



**Sandra Woodrow Hewitt**  
Professional Development





*Technology Workshop - Huronia Centennial*



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▶ THE CANCER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

**A**s part of my role as the Steward Chairperson, I am responsible for Goodwill. SCETF recognizes those significant events in the lives of our members including the birth of a child (by a SCETF member or spouse/partner), adoption of a child, marriages and bereavement of an immediate family member, major surgery, accidents, severe illness and other significant events when members would benefit from the support and thoughts of our Federation.

This could include a card, a gift card or a donation to a charity. Please forward information on those Goodwill items you would like recognized by SCETF to



**Sue Moxam**  
Steward Liaison

[sue@scetf.org](mailto:sue@scetf.org). Information needed would be what the event is, name and gender of child if a birth or adoption, names of both spouses in the case of a wedding, address, and if a death, the relationship to the member and a charity that SCETF can make a donation on the member's behalf.

Starting this year, SCETF will also be sponsoring members who are participating in a charity event. A \$50 sponsorship would be available to the first 20 members on a first-come basis for support of 20 different charities. To date, SCETF has made a donation to the Terry Fox Run and the CIBC Run for the Cure.

## ***Best Doctors***

This past June, a memo went out to all Simcoe ETFO Benefit Plan members outlining a number of plan design changes. One of those changes was the inclusion of Best Doctors Services. Over the past 20 years, Best Doctors has completed more than 20,000 InterConsultations. As a result of these InterConsultations, Best Doctors has changed diagnoses 22% of the time, modified treatments 61% of the time, and reduced invasive procedures by 67%.

What is Best Doctors? Best Doctors helps Canadians navigate the healthcare system through one-on-one coaching. It connects seriously ill individuals and their local treating physicians with world renowned specialists to confirm that the diagnosis and treatment plan are correct. All of this is provided without them ever having to leave home.

**INTERCONSULTATION™** - provides you with an in-depth review of your medical files by Best Doctors world renowned specialists to confirm the right diagnosis and right treatment options. You and your doctor benefit from the valuable insights of top medical experts and there is constant guidance and support from Best Doctors Member Advocates.

**BEST DOCTORS 360°™** - helps you navigate the healthcare system and take control of your own healthcare. By providing ongoing one-on-one support, customized health information and access to local resources, Best Doctors 360° is not just for serious illness, but can help all members.

**FINDBESTDOC™** - Best Doctors will locate a specialist if you do not have one and will provide assistance in arranging referrals, appointments and accommodations if out-of-town travel is necessary.

**FINDBESTCARE®** - Best Doctors will access hospital and doctor discounts if out-of-country care is necessary and will ensure vital information is sent to the medical specialists involved.

The InterConsultation service is at the core of everything Best Doctors does. It provides members with additional information, answers their questions and reassures them that their diagnosis and treatment plan are appropriate. And they never have to leave their home.

View the Best Doctors interactive presentation at [bestdoctorscanada.com/overview](http://bestdoctorscanada.com/overview), call 1-877-419-BEST (2378) or visit [bestdoctorscanada.com](http://bestdoctorscanada.com) for more information.



**Nathan Klaassen**  
**Benefits Officer**

## ***Do You Take Cholesterol Medication?***

In the past, Lipitor was the top selling prescription drug used to reduce elevated cholesterol levels. In 2010, Lipitor's patent expired. Generic versions of the drug were introduced and deemed interchangeable with Lipitor by Health Canada. Because generic drugs are available at a substantially reduced cost versus brand name drugs, they allow health insurance plans such as OTIP to maintain lower claim, and consequently, premium costs for group benefit plans.

Over the last year, OTIP has seen elevated drug claims for the brand name drug, Crestor. Crestor is also a prescription drug used to reduce elevated cholesterol levels. It is believed that some physicians may be substituting Crestor for Lipitor instead of prescribing a generic version of Lipitor. This switch has led to increased claim and premium costs for our plans.

To help limit rising costs, it is advised that generic drugs, when they can be safely interchanged with brand name drugs, be prescribed. If your cholesterol medication has been switched from Lipitor to Crestor in the past year, we encourage you to contact your doctor to determine if the

***For Cancer Care Assistance  
call 1-800-290-5106.***

***You will need your OTIP LTD policy number  
which is 45097-901A.***

On Wednesday, October 19, 2011, SCETF held their first Retirement Workshop for the 2011-2012 school year. There was over 60 members in attendance at this very informative evening. (See pictures below.)

Jennifer Mitchell, from Protective Services at ETFO discussed in detail, retirement options. She suggested that everyone should register for secure member website iAccess Web through the Ontario Teachers' Pension Board so they can have immediate access to pension estimates as well as being able to update their personal information. She also discussed the plan features of 85 Factor, CPP Reduction, Reduced Pension at age 50, 10-year Guarantee as well as other Pension options.

Daisie Gregory, a retired Simcoe County teacher and Chair of the Provincial Health Service and Insurance Committee for RTO/ERO discussed the various health, semi-private and dental plans available to

retirees, as well as information on gratuity, OAS and CPP Child Drop-Out Provision.

OTIP Marketing Specialist, Anita Chamberlain, highlighted OTIP Retiree Health Plans and outlined the protection and flexibility they offer. She also noted that OTIP is owned by ETFO and the other affiliates and explained that this provided OTIP Retiree Benefit Plan Members with added features such as CAREpath.

Upcoming Retirement Workshops for the 2011-2012 school year will be held on Wednesday, February 15th and Wednesday, April 18th. We have also added another workshop for teachers with five or more years left and it was held on Wednesday, November 16th.

*If you are thinking about retirement, contact the SCETF Office to book a spot - you must pre-register.*



**Roger Gagnon**  
Pension



**F**or the past few years, as Chair of the SCETF Executive, I found myself reminding the other members that the deadline for Chalk Talk submissions was fast approaching. For the first time, that deadline applies to me, and I almost forgot about it three times! Twice I hit the figurative snooze button and put it off because there was still “lots” of time. But now, the third time my calendar alarm sounded, no more snooze button for me, time to write.

September and October have been incredibly busy for me, as I’m sure they have been for all of you. Among the physical set-up of our classrooms, the introductions of students and teachers - twice, if your school reorganized - the creation of class routines and behaviour expectations, paper work, paper work and more paperwork, CASI, PM Benchmarks, PRIME, meet-the-teacher, the countless volunteer activities we do around school, and of course teaching, assessing and evaluating our students, how many of you have taken the time for yourselves? I hope the answer is everyone! Remember to take time to relax and enjoy time with your friends and family.

As Public Relations Chair, I get to help plan and organize fun activities for our members and their families. The following activities have been planned:

- Barrie Colts vs. Windsor at the BMC – Saturday, October 29, 2011
- Mary Poppins at Princess of Wales Theatre – Thursday, November 24, 2011
- Visit with Santa at In-Play, Barrie - Saturday, December 3, 2011 - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
- Barrie Colts vs. Guelph at the BMC - Saturday, January 21, 2012
- Barrie Colts vs. Mississauga at the BMC - Saturday, February 25, 2012

I also work to promote our Federation in the community and in the media. On Sunday, October 16th, some members of the Executive (Roger and Mark, cheered on by Janet, Sandra and Melanie), teachers from Ferndale Woods and some family members participated in the Second Annual Walk a Mile in Her Shoes in downtown Barrie. This



**Donnie Mills**  
Public Relations

fun and educational event raises money for the Women and Children’s Shelter of Barrie. I am proud to announce that Team Ferndale Woods (Chris Collins, my son, Mackenzie, and I) raised over \$1100 for the shelter. As well, SCETF made a \$500 donation to the Barrie Shelter. Congratulations team, and a special thank you to all our sponsors. I look forward to entering in this event next year and having more teachers involved.

In the meantime, are you man-enough? That’s right, it’s Movember. It’s time to grow your best moustache in support of men’s health. Whether you’re a Mo Bro, growing a ‘stache, or a Mo Sista, supporting the men in your life, get involved and have some fun!

This year, I will be surveying you, the members of SCETF, to find out what sort of activities and events you would like to be involved in throughout the year. Watch for a survey in your email soon; take a few minutes to share your opinion and win some great prizes! If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, I can be reached at [donnie@scetf.org](mailto:donnie@scetf.org).



# SCETF "PINK FLAMINGO" SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 2011





**W**ell, it's official. The Simcoe County District School Board is officially a provincial leader in proactive Health and Safety Policies and Procedures.

Now while you are picking yourself up off the floor, please rest assured that I am as shocked writing that as you are reading it. The truth however, is that as bad as you think things may be here, they are in fact a great deal worse in almost every other local. This was made even more evident at a recent Rep Council as I sat with other Provincial Representatives and discussed current and ongoing Health and Safety issues. Locals were shocked to hear how successful we were in not only implementing Bill 168 but in ensuring it was being followed correctly.

Sometimes we are so focused on getting more improvements and getting better language and better protections for our workers, that we lose track of just how far we have come. In this article, I am taking the time to look back and I have written down the Top 5 most significant Health and Safety changes, in my opinion, that have come into effect since I have been your Health and Safety Representative.

1. The Aggressive Incident Reporting Form – This is without a doubt the single greatest achievement we have seen initiated in the Board. It not only tracks the aggressive incidents, it also mandates a meeting with the site supervisor within three (3) days. The meeting is a workers chance to take control of the situation and address key issues and demand changes be put in place that will reduce the likelihood the aggressive incident will happen again.

2. The eSIS Alert System – This system came into effect after a MOL order and essentially creates a data base of every student in Simcoe County that has an existing Safety Plan. These students are “flagged” and when they transfer from one school to another within the Board, an email alert goes out when the student information is entered into eSIS. The student’s entry into the new school is then to be delayed until the new staff has had a chance to review and if necessary modify the previous Safety Plan.

3. The All-Member Online Risk Assessment Survey – I was amazed to learn that we are one of the only

Boards that took the time to survey the membership about their health and safety concerns and certainly one of only a handful that went with an online, all member approach. This was an unprecedented opportunity for workers to both confidentially and without fear of reprisals comment on their working conditions, potential hazards and unsafe working areas within their building.

4. The acknowledgement (supported by the MOL) that Teachers must have the ability to comment on and have input into a Safety Plan before they can be asked to work with an aggressive student. It is not acceptable to be handed a Safety Plan and be expected to just follow it, you must have an opportunity to provide feedback. This does not mean it has to be accepted but it does mean you have to be provided with an opportunity to comment.

5. The Occasional Worker Sign-Off – this is our most recent success and it came about after months of lobbying the Board to adopt some system or way to notify our Occasional Workers of potential hazards in the workplace. The new system is one which was proposed by the JHSC and it begins with a SCARRI message directing all Occasional Workers to check in at the office when they get to a school. At the office, the workers are to be given all the relevant safety information, including but not limited to, the Safety Plans for the students they will interact with. They should then be provided with an opportunity to read over the plans and procedures, ask questions and notify the supervisor if there are things they are unable to do in the plan. The final step in the process is to sign off that they have seen the documents.

As you can see, we have some great procedures in place and when they are used I believe they are effective in reducing the risk of injury. The problem is they are not always followed or they are not used correctly. It is everyone’s obligation to ensure the system operates correctly and that workers are safe, in saying that, if you encounter a situation where one of the above procedures is not followed, or not followed correctly, do not hesitate to contact the office to inform us.



**Mark Buff**  
**Health & Safety**

**I**t was a Major Minority. One seat short! With 53 seats going to the Liberals, they have won their third consecutive government in this Province. The SCETF Political Action Committee worked tirelessly to support the Liberal campaign in Barrie. Although the results did not end in our favour, the response to the campaign was positive.

Thank you to our members for volunteering to knock on doors, pound in signs and for scrutineering on Election Day. It was very encouraging to see so many people out participating in this process. For those members who made sure to get out and vote, thank you! We represent a large number of voters in this county and our votes can really make a difference when we chose to make them count.



**Jen Elliott**  
**Political Action**

As we move forward, let's hope that this government continues to properly support and fund public education as well as honour Collective Agreements and the bargaining process. With our contract ending in August of 2012, this government will be at the table when we negotiate our next contract.

Over 100 elementary and secondary schools participated in the *Student Vote* program across the four regions that Simcoe County is a part of. This excellent program teaches our youth about the importance of the democratic process. To those schools who got involved, please share your experiences with your colleagues. By the next election, it would be nice to see every school in Simcoe County involved in this outstanding program.



**ETFO President, Sam Hammond.**



**Dorothy Ramsay, Jen Elliott, Karl Walsh & Stephen Bertelsen at the Karl Walsh Campaign Office in Barrie.**

# CYSTIC FIBROSIS HALLOWEEN DANCE

Saturday, October 29, 2011



The 6th Annual *"It's Scary In Barrie"* Halloween event took place on October 29th at the Southshore Community Centre. Support for this event continued and over \$3000.00 was raised. SCETF is once again acknowledged for their generous donation. This year we would also like to extend a HUGE sincere thank you to Shauna Tiedeman and the entire staff from COOKSTOWN CENTRAL for their outstanding contribution of \$560.00. Everyone's support towards the fight against Cystic Fibrosis is gratefully appreciated. We look forward to seeing you at next year's, *"It's Scary In Barrie"* Halloween event.



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# “Girls on the Run”

Saturday, June 18, 2011





The Simcoe County Girls on the Run and Girls on Track Event was held on June 18th at the Barrie waterfront. Many SCETF Members were involved in this program for girls aged 8 to 12 years. This 5K run was the successful completion of the 2010-2011 program. The SCETF Status of Women Committee made a donation to this event and our logo was on the Girls on the Run t-shirts.



.....cont'd from page 2

principals were informed of this fact. Were IEPs late? Not if members worked late into the night and on weekends to overcome for the short fallings of this Board. This is how we are making things work.

Many complaints were received about how the PRIME Number Assessment was rolled out. No resources, no training, no release time and often no information were provided. My recommendation was to ask for support including assistance in finding the resources, asking for training and support to complete

the marking of this assessment. Did members follow this advice? In many situations, no. Did members make this work for the Board? In many cases, yes.

As we move forward to the next round of Collective Bargaining, we will need to stand together in solidarity to support our Collective Bargaining Team in order to get the best possible Collective Agreement and improvements to our working conditions.

Together we can achieve great things!!!!  
Divided we will fall.



Janet Bigham, President, SCETF; Joe Martone, President, OETCA - Simcoe Muskoka Elementary; Silvana Petersen, President, OPSEU Local 330; Michelle MacDonald, President, OECTA - Simcoe Muskoka Secondary; Lesley Chisholm, OPSEU Local 330; Ian Tudor, President, OSSTF District 17 TBU, showed support for OPSEU Local 340 Support Workers at Georgian College by joining the picketline in September, 2011 at the Barrie Campus.

## ***THE SCETF EXECUTIVE 2011 - 2013***

President - Janet Bigham  
1st Vice President - Nicholas Moxam  
2nd Vice President - Dorothy Ramsay  
3rd Vice President - Sheri Birch  
Secretary - Amy Graham  
Treasurer - Luc Voorn  
Annual Meeting Chair - Krista Haidner  
Chief Negotiator - Mark Butt  
Health & Safety Chair - Mark Butt  
Health & Safety Observer - Nick Moxam

New Teacher Chair - Melanie Blanchard  
Pension Chair - Roger Gagnon  
Political Action Chair - Jen Elliott  
Professional Learning Chair - Sandra Woodrow Hewitt  
Public Relations Chair - Donnie Mills  
Second Language Chair - Paul Maurice  
Status Of Women Chair - Amy Stepanek  
Steward Chair - Sue Moxam  
Chair - Kim Sturge

## **2011-2012 - SCETF UPCOMING EVENTS!!!**

- \*\*\*Retirement Workshop - SCETF Office - Wednesday, November 16, 2011**  
(\*\*\*NEW - Retirement Workshop for teachers with 5 or more years left)
- Santa's Christmas Party - In Play - Saturday, December 3, 2011**
- "Pregnancy Info Session" - SCETF Office - Tuesday, December 13, 2011**
- "Pregnancy Info Session" - SCETF Office - Tuesday, February 14, 2012**
- Retirement Workshop - SCETF Office - Wednesday, February 15, 2012**
- Winter Local Meeting - Barrie Holiday Inn - Wednesday, February 29, 2012**
- "International Women's Day Dinner" - SCETF Office**  
**- Wednesday, March 7, 2012**
- "Pregnancy Info Session" - SCETF Office - Tuesday, April 10, 2012**
- Retirement Workshop - SCETF Office - Wednesday, April 18, 2012**
- "Spring Fling" - Southshore Community Centre - Friday, April 12, 2012**
- SCETF Local Annual Meeting - SCETF Office - Wednesday, May 30, 2012**
- "Evening of Recognition" - Barrie Holiday Inn - Wednesday, June 6, 2012**
- "Pregnancy Info Session" - SCETF Office - Tuesday, June 12, 2012**
- "Pink Flamingo" Golf Tournament - t.b.a. - 2012**

***(Check out our website at [www.scetf.org](http://www.scetf.org) for continuous updates)***

**.....cont'd from last page**

more important, more relevant or more pressing then what will be discussed, shared, or presented at a staff meeting, then you have the right to not attend.

The bottom line is that we have polar opposite views as to what the word "expected" means and that this disagreement goes beyond our Local and the Board. This is a fundamental disagreement between OPSBA and ETFO and one

which will be solved through arbitration. ETFO firmly believes we are correct with our interpretation of the language and will provide all necessary support to our members.

If you as a professional, decide that you will not be attending a staff meeting. I would advise you to notify your administrator via email and in a very professional and polite manner inform them that you will not be attending the staff meeting and ask that you be provided with any information you may miss. While you do not need to explain your absence, as a professional, I believe it is your obligation to find out anything you may have missed.

If you have any questions, concerns or issues around your attendance at a staff meeting, please contact the SCETF Office at 705-728-2888.



# last but not least...

With our current Collective Agreement set to expire on August 31, 2012, I have started to prepare for the upcoming round of negotiations. Your County Collective Bargaining Committee has already met once to go through last year's surveys and to do a Collective Agreement Comparison between SCETF, OECTA and OSSTF. Our next step will be to use that information and go through the current Collective Agreement clause by clause and prepare our Preliminary Submission. Once the Preliminary Submission has been completed it must then be approved by the SCETF Executive and then brought before the membership for approval. I will then notify the Board of our intent to negotiate and we will be prepared to begin negotiations in June.

Clearly the focus of my Chalk Talk articles this year will be on the upcoming round of negotiations. But in this first article, I wanted to switch gears a little and take the time to reinforce a very misunderstood issue, Staff Meetings. The following article reflects the current ETFO stance on Staff Meetings.

29.05 - Regular Staff Meetings - regular staff meetings shall be scheduled by the Principal in consultation with the teaching staff and upon consensus whenever possible. Regularly scheduled staff meetings shall be held no more than once per month on average. Each meeting shall be no more than 75 minutes in length. The dates of the regular staff meetings shall be set within the first month of the school year and communicated to all teachers. Regularly scheduled staff meetings may include administrative/organizational issues, professional development, training and other matters aligned with school and Board goals. Teachers are expected to attend regularly scheduled staff meetings. Teachers may

submit agenda items to the Principal for consideration.

So what does Article 29.05 mean to a Teacher in the classroom? It means that you have one regular staff meeting per month which you are **expected (not required)** to attend. Your principal may schedule division meetings and PLC meetings and other types of meetings if they wish but they are strictly voluntary. It means the dates for each monthly staff meeting (for the entire school year) must have been shared with all staff in September. There should have been some pre-planning into the times of these meetings and therefore, the dates should not be changing. It means that all staff meetings

must end 75 minutes after they start, no exceptions. It is also our expectation that all staff meetings should be scheduled to begin soon (very soon) after the end of the instructional day and as a result, all staff meetings would be over by 5:00 p.m. at the latest. It means Professional Development may occur at staff meetings. In fact, your administrator can schedule anything that he or she deems necessary, important, or relevant during the 75 minute monthly meeting. It means while you have the right to submit agenda items for consideration, it is our expectation that the Staff Meetings would not consist entirely of PD and that operational issues that affect the entire school should be dealt with. If your principal refuses to place items on the agenda, please contact the SCETF Office. It means you are **expected (not required)** to attend. The word "expected" is the key to the entire clause and the greatest area of misunderstanding between Federation and the Board.

It is our belief that if you as a professional have another obligation that you deem

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**Mark Buff**  
Chief Negotiator

- visit our website at [www.scetf.org](http://www.scetf.org) -

## chalk talk

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interest of  
our Members.